

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 4 ISTANBUL 1680

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION ANKARA INFO ADANA IZMIR MAY 16
REPEATED FOR YOUR INFO

QUOTE
E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SHUM, TU
SUBJECT: MINORITIES IN ISTANBUL

REF: (A) STATE 99019; (B) ANKARA 3398

SUMMARY: FOR CENTURIES ISTANBUL HAS HAD LARGE MINORITY COMMUNITIES. FORMERLY THEY DOMINATED THE CITY'S COMMERCE AND PROFESSIONS, BUT IN RECENT YEARS, AS ISTANBUL'S POPULATION SURGED TO ITS PRESENT FOUR MILLION, THEY HAVE BECOME LESS SIGNIFICANT IN THE LIFE OF THE CITY. THE SIX MOST IMPORTANT MINORITY GROUPS AT PRESENT ARE THE FOLLOWING-- NUMBERS ESTIMATED: GREEKS (10-15,000); ARMENIANS (35-40,000); KURDS (OVER 100,000); ASSYRIANS (10-15,000); JEWS (60,000) AND BULGARIAN CHRISTIANS (4,000). SINCE THE REPUBLIC, ARMENIANS AND GREEKS HAVE HISTORICALLY HAD THE MOST PROBLEMS WITH TURKISH AUTHORITIES AND IT IS LARGELY WITH THESE TWO COMMUNITIES THAT PROBLEMS PERSIST. RECENT CHARGES AGAINST THE TURKS WHICH SEEM TO HAVE SOME BASIS INCLUDE: (1) LIMITING THE NUMBER OF PRIESTS BY REQUIRING THAT THEY BE TURKISH CITIZENS;
(2) RESTRICTING TRAVEL FOR CERTAIN GREEK PRELATES IN THE PATRIARCHY;
(3) PREVENTING THE MOST EFFECTIVE MINORITY LEADERS FROM ASSUMING
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OFFICIAL POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITIES;
(4) PROHIBITING ATTENDANCE AT ARMENIAN SCHOOLS OF CHILDREN WHO CANNOT FULLY DOCUMENT THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY;
(5) IMPOSING A DISCRIMINATORY 5 PCT TAX AGAINST COMMUNAL PROPERTY;
(6) REFUSAL OF BUILDING PERMITS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND OF PERMISSION TO IMPROVE OLD STRUCTURES.

IN THESE AND OTHER WAYS, ELEMENTS OF THE TURKISH BUREAUCRACY HAVE APPARENTLY INTERPRETED LAWS SO AS TO LIMIT OPPORTUNITIES OFR GROWTH OF MINORITY COMMUNITIES, ALTHOUGH NOT OF INDIVIDUALS PER SE. AS A GENERAL OBSERVATION, HOWEVER, WE SHOULD NOTE THAT ALL TURKS FIND THEIR GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY FRUSTRATING AND OFTER ARBITRARY, AND WE DO NOT DETECT AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGN AIMED AT CRIPPLING THE MINORITIES' EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THEIR ETHNIC IDENTITY. MINORITY GROUPS IN ISTANBUL DO NOT SEEM TO BE SUBJECT TO EXCESSIVE RESTRICTIONS ON THE PRACTICE OF THEIR RELIGION BEYOND TURKEY'S GENERALLY APPLIED SECULAR LAWS. NUMEROUS PRAOCHIAL SCHOOLS OPERATE IN ISTANBUL PROVIDING LANGUAGE AND CULTURAL INSTRUCTION IN GENERAL ACCORDANCE WITH THE DESIRES OF THE MINORITY COMMUNITIES, AND OTHER SOCILA INSTITUTIONS (E.G., ORPHANAGES AND HOSPITALS) PROVIDE SERVICES TO THEIR MEMBERS. IN ADDITION, MINORITY GROUPS WITH SOME EXCEPTIONS, SEEM TO ENJOY EDUCATIONSL, EMPLOYMENT, TRAVEL, HOUSING AND PUBLICATION OPPORTUNITIES COMPARABLE TO THOSE ACCORDED ALL TURKISH CITIZENS. 5#8 IS NOT TO MINIMIZE THE SENSE OF IN-SECURITY MINORITY OMMUNITIES FEEL DURING PERIODS OF HEIGHTENED TURKISH NATIONALISM (WHICH HAS BEEN REINFORCED TO SOME EXTENT BY THE CURRENT RESURGENCE OF ISLAMIC SENTIMENT). SMALLER AND LESS INFLUENTIAL THAN IN THE PAST, THESE GROUPS ARE UNDOUBTEDLY CONCERNED OVER THEIR VULNERABILITY TO REPRISALS. IN OUR ESTIMATION, HOWEVER, EVEN WITHOUT EXTRA PROTECTION FROM THE AUTHORITIES, WHICH HAS BEEN PROVIDED DURING PERIODS WHEN REPRISALS COULD BE EXPECTED (E.G., PROTECTION FOR GREEKS DURING 1974 CYPRUS CIRISIS AND FOR ARMENIANS WHEN TWO TURKISH AMBASSADORS WERE ASSASSINATED, RE-PORTEDLY BY ARMENIAN TERRORISTS), THE LESS VISIBLE MINORITY COMMUNITIES HAVE BECOME LESS RESENTED AND MORE ACCEPTED BY THE TURKISH COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

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IN SUM, WHILE THERE ARE CERTAIN IMPEDIMENTS TO COMPLETELY FREE FUNCTIONING OF THE MINORITY COMMUNITIES, THESE ARE NOT THE RESULT OF A SYSTEMATIC EFFORT BY THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT TO DESTROY THE COMMUNITIES, AND CERTAINLY COULD NOT BE DESCRIBED AS CULTURAL GENOCIDE. OUR GENERAL IMPRESSION IS THAT THE RESTRICTIONS ARE NO MORE SEVERE THAN THEY HAVE BEEN IN EARLIER PERIODS, ANDPERHAPS LESS SO. DESPITE THIS, THE MINORITIES CLEARLY FEEL UNDER PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURE, REFLECTING UNCERTAINTY OVER THE FUTURE AND CONCERN THAT SOME EVENT COULD UNLEASH THE FURIES AGAINST THEM. END SUMMARY

1. ISTANBUL HAS FOR CENTURIES BEEN NOTED FOR ITS NUMEROUS AND LARGE MINORITY COMMUNITIES. THIS IS LESS TRUE TODAY, BUT MINORITY GROUPS STILL ABOUND. IN ADDITION TO THE MAJOR GROUPS WHICH WE WILL LIST BELOW, THERE ARE IN ISTANBUL COMMUNITIES OF POLES, SERBO-CROATIONS, ALBANIANS AND A MIXTURE OF CHRISTIANS FROM VARIOUS EUROPEAN STATES WHO TOOK TURKISH CITIZENSHIP AFTER THE TREATY OF LAUSANNE. THERE ARE OTHERS TOO (INCLUDING THOUSANDS OF IRANIANS, TURKOMANS AND ARABS), BUT WE ARE NOT AWARE THAT ANY

OF THESE GROUPS OR THOSE MENTIONED ABOVE HAVE MAJOR COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT BY TURKISH AUTHORITIES.

2. THERE FOLLOWS A LISTING OF THE MOST IMPORTANT MINORITIES AND MINORITY INSTITUTIONS IN ISTANBUL, ALONG WITH OUR COMMENTS. IN SUBSEQUENT SECTION WE DELINEATED SPECIFIC AREAS OF FREEDOM GENERALLY ACCORDED ALL TURKISH CITIZENS AND OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH MINORITIES PRTAKE OF, OR ARE DENIED THEM.

A. GREEKS: THE GREEK CONSULATE GENERAL TOLD US RECENTLY THAT THERE ARE NOW ONLY ABOUT 8,000 GREEKS LIVING IN ISTANBUL, DOWN FROM SOME 96,000 IN 1955 WHEN ANTI-GREEK RIOTS IN THE CITY BEGAN THE MAJOR EXODUS FROM ISTANBUL. THAT FIGURE SEEMS A BIT LOW IN OUR ESTIMATION. BASED ON RECENT REPORTS WE HAVE HEARD, AND FROM BIG TURNOUT THIS YEAR FOR EASTER SERVICES AT GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCHES, THERE ARE PROBABLY 10-15,000 OR PERHAPS EVEN MORE STILL HERE. THERE ARE ESTIMATED TO BE 30 STILL FUNCTIONING

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GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN THE CITY. THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH IS HEADED BY THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH WITH ITS SEAT IN ISTANBUL. PRESENT INCUMBENT IS HIS HOLINESS PARTIARCH DEMETRIOS, A RATHER RETIRING FIGURE. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE GREEK COMMUNITY CONTINUES TO CONTRACT THROUGH EMIGRAION AND ATTRITION (IT INCLUDES A LARGE PROPORTION OF OLDER PEOPLE). STILL, ACCORDING TO THE GREEK CONSULAGE GENERAL, THERE IS A STUDENT POPULATION OF ABOUT 1,000 IN GREEK PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS, OF WHICH THERE ARE 20 ELEMENTARY (SOME VERY SMALL WITH ONLY A HANDFUL OF STUDENTS) AND SIX HIGH SCHOOLS. THERE ARE ALSO AT LEAST TWO ORPHANAGES OPERATED BY THE GREEK COMMUNITY.

B. ARMENIANS: WE ESTIMATE THERE ARE ABOUT 35-40,000 ARMENIANS IN ISTANBUL. HOWEVER, THE COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION IS CHANGING. MANY OF THE BETTER EDDUCATED AND MORE WEALTHY ARMENIANS, OF WHOM THERE ARE MANY, ARE LEAVING TURKEY, BUT THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN ISTANBUL REMAINS RELATIVELY CONSTANT WITH THE INFLUX OF UNEDUCATED IMMIGRANTS FROM EASTERN TURKEY. THE AREMENIAN APOSTOLIC (GREGORIAN) CHURCH IS HEADQUARTERED IN ISTANBUL. ITS LEADER IS PATRIARCH SYNORK KALOUSTIAN, A DYNAMIC AND EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATOR WHO IS NOT RELUCANT TO SPEAK OUT TO THE TURKISH AUTHORITIES IN DEFENSE OF HIS FLOCK. THERE ARE 32 ARMENIAN SCHOOLS IN ISTANBUL AND ABOUT THE SAME NUMBER OF CHRUCHES. SOME OF THE SCHOOLS ARE RELATIVELY LARGE, ONE HIGH SCHOOL HAS SEVERAL HUNDRED STUDENTS. THERE ARE ALSO ONE SMALL HOSPITAL AND AT LEAST TWO ORPHANAGES RUN BY THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY IN ISTANBUL.

C. KURDS: WE DO NOT REALLY KNOW HOW MANY KURDS THERE ARE IN ISTANBUL. THERE ARE
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SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE CITY. ONE HEARS THE FIGURE OF A QUARTER-OF-A-MILLION. THAT IS PROBABLY AN EXAGGERATION, BUT THERE ARE CERTAINLY TENS OF THOUSANDS. IN GENERAL, KURDS (SUNNI MUSLIMS AND INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM OTHER TURKS) ARE INTEGRATED INTO THE BROADER SOCIETY, ALTHOUGH THEY UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE THEIR OWN SOCIAL GATHERING PLACES AND THERE ARE AREAS OF THE CITY PREDOMINANTLY SETTLED BY KURDS. (THIS PATTERN IS TYPICAL OF IMMIGRANTS TO ISTANBUL, E.G., THERE ARE SECTIONS PREDOMINANTLY SETTLED BY TURKS FROM THE BLACK SEA AREA.) RECENT KURDISH EMIGRANTS TO ISTANBUL ARE USUALLY UNEDUCATED PEASANTS. ALTHOUGH AGAIN THERE ARE NO STATISTICS, THERE APPEAR TO BE A LARGE NUMBER OF KURDISH STUDENTS IN ISTANBUL'S UNIVERSITIES. WE OFTEN HEAR THE UNSUBSTANTIATED CLAIM THAT A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERS OF THE SO-CALLED "MAOIST" GROUPS ARE KURDS. CERTAINLY MANY OF THE EXTREME LEFT GROUPS OPERATING HERE HAVE ENDORSED THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT KURDISH STATE WHICH EXPLAINS THEIR APPEAL TO KURDISH YOUTH. BECAUSE OF THEIR SEPARATIST GOALS, RADICAL KURDISH STUDENTS, WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN A GOOD MANY OF ISTANBUL'S INCIDENTS OF STUDENT VIOLENCE AND TERRORIST ATTACKS OF RECENT YEARS, ARE VIEWED WITH SUSPICION BY ISTANBUL POLICE. WE HAVE NOT, HOWEVER, DETECTED ANY PARTICULAR ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION BEHIND THIS ATTITUDE; IT IS VIOLENT EXTREMISTS, SOME OF WHOM ARE KURDS, THAT THE POLICE SEEK TO CONTROL. ON THE OTHER HAND, MANY KURDS IN ISTANBUL ARE PPROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT WHICH YOUNG RADICALS WANT TO BRING DOWN. SOME OF
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ISTANBUL'S LEADING BUSINESSMEN AND PROFESSIONALS ARE KURDS. MANY PROMINENT MEMBERS OF THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY AND HIGH-RANKING MILITARY OFFICERS ALSO COME FROM THIS GROUP. ALTHOUGH WE COULD NOT COME UP WITH A GENERAL, WE DO REMEMBER NUMEROUS KURDS WHO HELD THE RANK OF COLONEL IN THE ARMED FORCES AND SOME OF THEM WERE STATIONED IN SENSITIVE SECURITY POSITIONS IN THE ISTANBUL AREA.

D. ASSYRIANS (SYRIAC CHIRSTIANS): ONLY TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, THERE WAS ONLY A HANDFUL OF SYRIAC CHRISTIANS IN ISTANBUL. APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC PRESSURE IN THEIR ORIGINAL HOME IN

AND AROUND MARDIN PROVINCE, THEY BEGAN COMING HERE. NOW THERE ARE PERHAPS 10-15,000 RESIDING IN ISTANBUL. THEY HAVE THREE CHURCHES, AND OPERATE AT LEAST ONE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL. ASSYRIANS APPEAR VERY WELL INTEGRATED INTO THE GENERAL SOCIETY AND THEIR BUSINESSES APPEAR TO BE PROSPERING.

E. JEWS: THERE HAS BEEN A JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ISTANBUL FOR CENTURIES. IT NOW NUMBERS ABOUT 60,000, BUT MANY JEWISH-ORIGIN ISTANBULLUS HAVE BEEN SO THOROUGHLY ABSORBED BY THE SOCIETY IN GENERAL (ADOPTING MUSLIM NAMES AND CUSTOMS) THAT THEY ARE LOST TO ANY MINORITY GROUP COUNT. THERE IS A CHIEF RABBI RESIDENT IN ISTANBUL AND TWENTY ACTIVE SYNAGOGUES (SOME ARE SMALL BUT SEVERAL HAVE SIZEABLE CONGREGATIONS). THERE IS ALSO A JEWISH HOSPITAL. PROMINENT JEWS ARE FOUND IN MOST OF THE PROFESSIONS; SOME OF THE CITY'S LEADING BUSINESSMEN ARE JEWS; AND IN GENERAL THEY SEEM TO US TO SUFFER LEAST OF ANY OF THE MINORITIES FROM OFFICIAL DISCRIMINATION. TURKS ARE NOT IMMUNE TO ANTI-SEMITISM, BUT WE NOTE A GENERAL ADMIRATION AND SYMPATHY FOR THE ISRAELI STATE IN ITS STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE WHICH HELPS TO CREATE A HOSPITABLE ATMOSPHERE FOR THE LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY PERHAPS UNIQUE TO THE MUSLIM WORLD.

F. BULGARIAN CHRISTIANS: THERE ARE ABOUT 4,000 BULGARIAN CHRISTIANS IN ISTANBUL; AND THERE IS A BULGARIAN ORTHODOX BISHOP RESIDENT HERE. THE COMMUNITY HAS TWO CHURCHES AND A HOSPITAL.
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SO FAR AS WE KNOW, THEY HAVE PROSPERED IN ISTANBUL AND DO NOT COMPLAIN OF TURKISH PRESSURE TO ABSORB THEIR CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUP.

3. IMROZ (IMBROS) AND GOZCAADA (TENEDOS): OUT OF AN ESTIMATED POPULATION OF 5,000 ON THESE TWO ISLANDS, ABOUT 3,000 ARE ETHNIC GREEKS. WE ARE TOLD THAT BEGINNING IN THE LATE SIXTIES AS TENSIONS BUILT UP AGAIN OVER CYPRUS, TURKISH TROOPS BEGAN TO BE STATIONED THERE IN INCREASING NUMBERS. WHETHER AS A RESULT OF CONSCIOUS POLICY TO CHANGE THE ETHNIC BALANCE OR SPONTANEOUS POPULATION SHIFTS, WE ARE TOLD NUMEROUS LAZ RETIRED FROM MILITARY SERVICE, REMAINED, BROUGHT THEIR FAMILIES AND BEGAN TO SET UP SQUATTERS' COMMUNITIES ON LAND FORMERLY HELD BY GREEKS. THIS TREND APPARENTLY CONTINUES AND WE UNDERSTAND SOME LOCAL TURKS HAVE ALSO BEEN DISPLACED. THIS SETTLEMENT PATTERN IS UNDOUBTEDLY ABETTED BY A LOCAL BUREAUCRACY SYMPATHETIC TO IT, AND WOULD ACCOUNT FOR REPORTS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST GREEKS. OUR SOURCE FOR THIS INFORMATION, WHO HAS FAMILY ON THE ISLANDS AND VISITS THERE OCCASIONALLY, KNEW OF NO INCIDENTS OF DAMAGE TO GREEK PROPERTY OR VIOLENCE AGAINST THE GREEK POPULATION.

4. WE WOULD NOW LIKE TO DEAL WITH SOME OF THOSE AREAS IN WHICH MINORITY GROUPS HAVE FELT OR THERE IS POTENTIAL FOR THEIR BEING DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN ISTANBUL (AND WE MAKE NO PRETENSE

THAT IT IS AN ALL INCLUSIVE ACCOUNTING). HERE WE WILL BE DEALING PRINCIPALLY WITH THE ARMENIANS AND GREEKS, SINCE, AS WE INDICATED ABOVE IN OUR COMMENTS, WE ARE NOT AWARE THAT THE OTHER MINORITY GROUPS MENTIONED FEEL THESE PRESSURES TO ANY SERIOUS EXTENT.

(A) RELIGION: ARMENIANS, GREEKS AND THE OTHERS REGULARLY ATTEND SERVICES IN THE NUMEROUS CHURCHES IN ISTANBUL, AND CHRISTIAN CLERGY WITH RELATIVE FREEDOM ATTEND TO THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF THEIR CONGREGATIONS. CLERGYMEN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO WEAR CLERICAL GARB IN PUBLIC, BUT THIS RESTRICTION DATES BACK TO THE ATATURKIAN SECULAR REFORMS AND APPLIES EQUALLY TO MUSLIM RELIGIOUS FIGURES. VESTMENTS ARE WORN DURING CHURCH SERVICES, HOWEVER, AND IN PUBLIC
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FOR CERTAIN RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS. FOR INSTANCE, ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST DAILIES CARRIED A PICTURE THE DAY AFTER EASTER OF A RELIGIOUS PROCESSION IN ISTANBUL'S FAMOUS "POLICH VILLAGE" (POLLANAISE KOY) LED BY A PRIEST IN ELABORATE VESTMENTS. THE CLERGY OF MINORITY GROUPS ARE REQUIRED TO BE TURKISH CITIZENS. THIS HAS REPORTEDLY WORKED SOME HARDSHIP ON THE GREEKS IN PARTICULAR. THEY, HOWEVER, ARE OPERATING A SMALL SEMINARY/MONASTERY ON THE PRINCES ISLANDS WHERE WE UNDERSTAND SOME 15 STUDENTS ARE PREESTHOOD. THE ARMENIANS, WE ARE TOLD, HAVE A SEMINARY IN EASTERN TURKEY WHICH SUPPLIES THEIR CLERGY. A NEW REQUIREMENT BY THE LOCAL SECURITY OFFICE (WHICH ADMINISTERS ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS) THAT MEMBERS OF CHURCH BOARDS FOR ARMENIAN AND GREEK CHURCHES BE RESIDENTS OF THOSE CHURCHES' PARISHES HAS ALSO REPORTEDLY CAUSED DIFFICULTY. SETTLEMENT PATTERN FOR GREEKS AND ARMENIANS HAVE CHANGED DRASTICALLY OVER THE YEARS, AND THEY ARE NOW SCATTERED ALL OVER ISTANBUL AND DO NOT NECESSARILY LIVE NEAR THEIR CHURCHES. THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCH IS REPORTEDLY RESISTING THIS REQUIREMENT, POINTING OUT THAT EVEN MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT ARE NOT REQUIRED TO RESIDE IN THEIR CONSTITUENCIES.

BY MANY ACCOUNTS, ONE TACTIC USED BY TURKISH AUTHORITIES IN THEIR DEALINGS WITH THE MINORITIES IS TO PREVENT THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND OUTSPOKEN LEADERS FROM ASSUMING POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES. IN THE LAST SELECTION OF A NEW ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH, THEY ARE ACCUSED OF DISQUALIFYING THE MORE DYNAMIC CANDIDATES WITH INTERNATIONAL REPUTATIONS. IN ADDITION, WE HAVE HEARD OF A RECENT INSTANCE WHEN A PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL WAS PRECIPITIOUSLY REMOVED FROM HER POSITION AT A GREEK PAROCHIAL SCHOOL.

THERE HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST AND THERE MAY STILL BE RESTRICTIONS ON SOME GREEK PRELATES' TRAVEL ABROAD. THE FORMER PATRIARCH AND METROPOLITAN MELITON WERE DENIED TRAVEL DOCUMENTS IN THE PAST. THE PRESENT ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH, WE UNDERSTAND, IS NOT AS INTERESTED IN FOREIGN TRAVEL AS HIS PREDECESSOR, BUT MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN DENIED EXIST PERMISSION. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE ARMENIAN
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PATRIARCH, WHO FORMERLY RESIDED IN THE U.S. FOR MANY YEARS, HAS TRAVELED ABROAD FREQUENTLY, AND HAS VISITED THE UNITED STATES

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SEVERAL TIMES IN RECENT YEARS.

(B) EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY: AS NOTED ABOVE, THE MINORITY GROUPS OPERATE THEIR OWN PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS. THEY ARE IN A SENSE SUBSIDIZED BY THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WHICH PROVIDES TURKISH TEACHERS FOR SUBJECTS SUCH AS TURKISH HISTORY AND CULTURE AND THE TURKISH LANGUAGE, ALTHOUGH THE SCHOOLS WOULD PROBABLY PREFER NAMING THEIR OWN TEACHERS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN BETTER CONTROL OF THE CURRICULUM. UNDER AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN GREECE AND TURKEY, 35 GREEK INSTRUCTORS ARE ALLOWED TO TEACH IN ISTANBUL WHILE 35 TURKS ARE SENT TO INSTRUCT TURKISH CHILDREN IN GREECE. SUBTLE \$3-EMPHASIS OF GREEK CULTURE IN PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS IS, ACCORDING TO THE GREEK CONSULATE GENERAL, IMPOSED BY REQUIRING A HIGHER PASSING GRADE FOR TURKISH THAN FOR GREEK. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY HAS BEEN UPSET RECENTLY AT TURKISH OFFICIALS' REFUSAL TO ALLOW SOME 250 ARMENIAN STUDENTS TO ENROLL IN ARMENIAN PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS. DIFFICULTY DERIVED FROM FACT THAT THESE STUDENTS WERE FROM FAMILIES OF RECENT IMMIGRANTS FROM EASTERN TURKEY AND MANY SPOKE ONLY TURKISH, HAD TURKISH NAMES AND HAD BEEN REGISTERED AT BIRTH AS CHRISTIANS, RATHER THAN ARMENIAN CHRISTIANS.

WE ARE IMPRESSED BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF MINORITY GROUP MEMBERS WHO HAVE RECEIVED HIGHER DEGREES FROM TURKISH INSTITUTIONS. THE GREEKS AND ARMENIANS COUNT MANY HIGHLY TRAINED PROFESSIONALS IN THEIR RANKS, AND THERE SEEMS TO BE NO DISCRIMINATION IN

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UNIVERSITY ADMINSSION PRECEDURES. THE GREEK CONSULATE GENERAL TOLD US THAT SOME 70 GREEK YOUTHS WERE STUDYING IN ISTANBUL UNIVERSITIES, AND ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO STATISTICS, ARE CERTAIN THAT THER ARE MANY MORE ARMENIANS ON THE CITY'S CAMPUSES.

(C) PROPERTY RIGHTS: THERE ARE SEVERAL PRACTICES OF THE BUREAUCRACY WHICH HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN USED TO RESTRICT THE GROWTH OF AT LEAST THE GREEK AND ARMENIAN MINORITY ORGANIZATIONS WHICH ADMINISTER THESE GROUPS' PROPERTIES. THE DEPARTMENT OF FOUNDATIONS, AN ENTITY ATTACHED TO THE OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER, IMPOSES WHAT APPEARS TO BE IN EFFECT A DISCRIMINATORY TAX AGAINST THESE COMMUNITIES BEYOND REGULAR MUNICIPAL AND STATE TAXES. THIS IS LEVIED IN THE FORM OF AN INSPECTION FEE. A WELL-INFORMED SOURCE TELLS US THIS INSPECTION'S SOLE PURPOSE IS APPARENTLY TO RATE THE COMMUNAL ORGANIZATIONS' INCOME AS HIGH AS POSSIBLE FOR PURPOSES OF LEVYING THIS TAX--AND THE 5 PCT INSPECTION FEE CANNOT BE COUNTED WITH EXPENSES OF THE COMMUNITY. EXPENDITURES OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS ARE ALSO SUBJECT TO EXTRAORDINARY REGULATIONS REQUIRING APPROVAL OF ANYTHING OVER 250 TURKISH LIRA. THE ARMENIAN AND GREEK COMMUNITIES OWN SOME VERY VALUABLE LAND IN THE CITY AND NUMICIPAL AUTHORITIES, WE ARE TOLD, HAVE USED THEIR CONTROL OVER BUILDING PERMITS TO FRUSTRATE MINORITY GROUPS' EFFORTS TO PUT UP NEW OR IMPROVE AND ESPAND OLD BUILDINGS. WE WERE CITED TWO RECENT INCIDENCES WHEN THIS HAPPENED TO BOTH THE ARMENIANS AND THE GREEKS IT IS OFTEN STATED THAT EXPANSION OF THESE FACILITIES ARE LIMITED BY TURKISH LAW UNTIL THEY CAN BE JUSTIFIED BY DEMONSTRATING THEIR NEED BECAUSE OF GROWTH IN THE SIZE OF THE COMMUNITY, AND SINCE THE MINORITY GROUPS' POPULATION ARE STABLE OR DIMINISHING, NO SUCH EXPANSION CAN BE JUSTIFIED. WE DO NOT, HOWEVER, KNOW WHERE ANY SUCH LAW IS RECORDED. REPAIRS AND IMPROVE-MENTS ON SOME MINORITY GROUP BUILDING MAY BE RESTRICTED BECAUSE OF TURKISH LAWS PROHIBITING TAMPERING WITH HISTORICAL MONUMENTS. THE PICTURESQUE CRUMBLING OTTOMAN MANSIONS OWNED BY TURKS ALONG THE BOSPHOROUS HAVE ALSO BEEN CAUGHT IN THIS REGULATION AND, AS A RESULT, SEEM DESTINED TO CONTINUED DECAY AND EVENTULA COLLPASE.

(C) TRAVEL AND IMMIGRATION: WE HAVE DETECTED NO ATTEMPT (OTHER
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THAN IN THE CASE OF THE GREEK PRELATES' MENTIONED ABOVE) BY TURKISH AUTHORITIES TO IMPEDE INTERNAL OR FOREIGN TRAVEL OR IMMIGRATION BY MINORITY GROUPS. ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS, WE PROCESS NUMEROUS MINORITY APPLICATIONS FOR BOTH NON-IMMIGRANT AND IMMIGRANT VISAS. MINORITY STUDENTS TAKE FREE ADVANTAGE OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD; TOURISTS AND BUSINESSMEN FREQUENTLY TRAVEL OVERSEAS.

FOR INSTANCE, WE KNOW OF ONE HIGH EXECUTIVE IN THE EXPORT OFFICE OF A STATE-OWNED CORPORATION WHO IS GREEK, AND HE SEEMS TO SPEND HALF HIS TIME ON BUSINESS TRIPS ABROAD.

AT THE SAME TIME, DESPITE THE CLEAR TREND TOWARD IMMIGRATION OF THE GREEK COMMUNITY, ESPECIALLY ITS YOUNGER MEMBERS, WE FIND LITTLE EVIDENCE OF A CONSCIOUS EFFORT BY AUTHORITIES TO FORCE THEM OUT. TO THE CONTRARY, ONE VIEW HAS IT THAT THE TURKS WANT TO MAINTAIN A SIZEABLE GREEK COMMUNITY HERE AS A MEANS TO GUARANTEE GOOD TREATMENT FOR THE MUCH MORE NUMEROUS TURKS IN GREECE. CITED AS AN EXAMPLE OF THIS POLICY IN ACTION IS THE HEAVY POLICE PROTECTION GIVEN GREEK PROPERTIES DURING THE 1974 CYPRUS CRISIS. ARMENIAN PARTIARCH TOLD CONGEN OFFICER HE GREATLY APPRECIATED SIMILAR PROTECTION GIVEN HIS COMMUNITY BY LOCAL SECURITY FORCES FOLLOWING REPORTS THAT ARMENIAN TERRORISTS GROUPS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSASSINATION OF TURKISH AMBASSADORS IN VIENNA AND PARIS A YEAR OR SO AGO.

(E) ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY: AS NOTED ABOVE, THERE ARE APPARENT OBSTACLES IMPOSED ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF MINORITY GROUPS' COMMUNAL PROPERTIES, BUT WE FIND LITTLE EVIDENCE OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIVIDUALS' OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT, INCLUDING THE PURCHASE AND SALE OF PROPERTY. MINORITY GROUP MEMEBERS ARE ACTIVE IN ALMOST ALL PROFESSIONAL CATEGORIES, AND IN MANY NOTABLE INSTANCES ARE THE LEADERS IN THEIR FIELD. THERE IS ONE EXCEPTION, WHICH COMES READLY TO MIND, ARMENIANS AND GREEKS DO NOT APPEAR TO PROSPER IN MINLTARY CAREERS, THEY DO NOT GENRALLY ADVANCE BEYOND THE LEVEL OF NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY AND ARE MADE OFFICERS ONLY IN THE RESERVE CORPS. MINORITIES SEEM TO HAVE FREE ACCESS TO HOUSING IN ISTANBUL, AND ALTHOUGH THERE ARE CONCENTRATIONS OF MINORITY COMMUNITIES IN

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CERTAIN AREAS WHERE THEY HAVE TRADITIONALLY LIVED, THEY CAN NEVERTHELESS BUY OR RENT A HOME ANYWHERE IN THE CITY.

(F) PRESS FREEDOM: MINORITIES IN ISTANBUL HAVE READILY AVAILED THEMSELVES OF TURKEY'S RELATIVELY LIBERAL PRESS LAWS. THERE ARE SIX ARMENIAN DAILIES AND PERIODICALS PUBLISHED HERE, SEVERAL GREEK PUBLICATIONS, ONE IN HEBREW AND ONE IN TURKISH PUT OUT BY THE ASSYRIANS. AT LEAST TWO OF TURKEY'S MOST INFLUENTIAL JOURNALISTS COME FROM JEWISH FAMILIES. TWO OF THE MAJOR DAILIES, GUNAYDIN AND HURRIEYT OCCASIONALLY SEEM TO PLAY ON ETHNIC THESES. IF A LOCAL ARMENIAN OR GREEK IS INVOLVED IN A CRIME, HE IS OFTEN IDENTIFIED BY RACE IN THE PRESS REPORT. LAST YEAR HURRITYE RAN A LONG SERIES ON THE GREEK PARRIARCHY WHICH ACCUSED IT,, OVER THE YEARS, OF INDULGING IN SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES AGAINST THE TURKISH STATE. EVEN MUCH LESS XENOPHOBIC MILLIYET RECENTLY CARRIED ARTICLE ON A PARTICIDE/CANNIBAL IN THE U.S. WH WAS INDENTIFIED AS A GREEK. HOWEVER, WE VIEW THESE AS ABBERATIONS RATHER THAN THE RULE AND BELIEVE THEY ARE EXPRESSIONS OF PERSONAL

PREJUDICE USED TO STIMULATE CIRCULATION RATHER THAN ANY PERVASIVE CAMPAIGN TO VILIFY THE MINORITIES. WE KNOW OF NO GOVERNMENT ATTEMPT TO ENCOURAGE SUCH REPORTING.

5. COMMENT: IN SUM, WE CONCLUDE THAT THERE HAVE BEEN SOME OBSTACLES IMPOSED THROUGH THE TURKISH BUREAUCRACY (WHICH ALL TURKS FIND FRUSTRATING AND OFTEN ARBITRARY) THAT HAVE HAD THE EFFECT OF LIMITING THE ABILITY OF MINORITY INSTITUTIONS IN ISTANBUL TO GROW AND PROSPER. HOWEVER, THESE ORGANIZATIONS HAVE NOT BEEN CRIPPLED IN THEIR EFFORTS TO PRESERVE ETHNIC IDENTITY. ALTHOUGH MEMBERS OF MINORITIES MAY FROM TIME TO TIME BE SUBJECT TO INSTANCES OF PERSONAL PREJUDICE BY THE POPULATION FROM TIME TO TIME, THEY ARE ACCORDED, IN GENERAL, OPPORTUNITIES SIMILAR TO THOSE OF OTHER TURKS FOR FOREIGN TRAVEL, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT.

IT SEEMS TO US THAT THERE HAS BEEN AN INTENSIFICATION IN

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ACTION EUR-12

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RECENT YEARS OF TURKISH NATIONALISTIC FEELING PARTIALLY AS THE RESULT OF A SURGE OF PRIDE OVER THE CYPRUS INTERVENTION AND A SUBSEQUENT SENSE OF ISOLATION FROM THE UNITED STATES (OVER THE ARMS EMBARGO) AND THE REST OF EUROPE. DURING THIS PERIOD OF EMOTIONALLY CHARGED NATIONALISM SPURRED ON BY TENSION WITH GREECE OVER THE AEGEAN, IT IS REALLY SOMEWHAT SURPRISING THAT THERE HAVE BEEN NO INSTANCES OF REPRISALS AGAINST THE LOCAL GREEK COMMUNITY. THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITY AFTER TERRORISTS, WIDELY BELIEVED IN TURKEY TO HAVE BEEN ARMENIANS, KILLED TWO TURKISH AMBASSADORS. IN 1971, THE TURKISH CONSUL GENERAL IN LOS ANGELES HAD BEEN MURDERED BY AN INDIVIDUAL OF ARMENIAN DESCENT. AS POINTED OUT ABOVE, THE TURKISH GOVERNMENT WENT TO SOME EFFORT TO INSURE THAT THERE WERE NO SUCH INCIDENTS. AT THE SAME TIME, WE FEEL THAT THERE IS LESS LIKELIHOOD THAT SUCH REPRISALS WOULD HAVE OR IN FUTURE WILL OCCUR EVEN WITHOUT EX-

TRAORDINARY SECURITY PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT THE MINORITIES.
ARMENIAN AND GREEK COMMUNITIES ARE LESS IMPORTANT THAN THEY ONCE
WERE IN ISTANBUL, THEY ARE SMALLER AND LESS LIKELY TO ATTRACT
ATTENTION. THEY HAVE BEEN ENGULFED IN THE GENERAL BOOM OF URBAN
GROWTH, AND MINORITY MEMBERS' PRE-EMINENT POSITION IN MOST BUSINESS
AND PROFESSIONAL FIELDS HAVE BEEN TAKEN OVER BY TURKS.
THUS, ENVY OF MINORITY MEMBERS' PRIVILEGED POSITION IN TURKISH
SOCIETY IS NO LONGER AS MUCH OF A FACTOR AS IT ONCE WAS IN CREATING
RESENTMENT AGAINST THESE GROUPS.

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AT THE SAME TIME, AS THEY GROW SMALLER AND LESS INFLUENTIAL,
THE MINORITIES MUST FEEL AN INCREASING SENSE OF VULNERABILITY,
ESPECIALLY DURING PERIODS OF HEIGHTENED TURKISH NATIONALISM.
WITH MEMORIES OF PAST REPRISALS, THE PROTECTION OF ANONYMITY
SEEMS INADEQUATE AND THEY FEEL DEEP SENSE OF INSECURITY. IN
THIS REGARD, WE SHOULD NOTE THAT MINORITIES HERE HAVE EXPRESSED
INCREASED CONCERN ABOUT THEIR FUTURE IN TURKEY WITH THE
EMERGENCE OF A STRONG ISLAMIC-ORIENTED POLITICAL PARTY,
THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP). IT WAS POINTED OUT TO US THAT
THE OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPOSING THE 5 PERCENT "INSPECTION
FEE" MENTIONED ABOVE WERE MEMBERS OF THE NSP IN THE OFFICE OF
ASSOCIATIONS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO GAUGE, BUT RECENT MINORITIES'
IMMIGRATION OUT OF TURKEY (ESPECIALLY BY RELATIVELY WELL-OFF
ARMENIANS) MAY IN PART BE CAUSED BY UNEASINESS OVER THIS
PHENOMENON.
END COMMENT

6. THIS REPORT WAS COMPILED FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES. FOR
REASONS GIVEN PARA 2, WE DID NOT SEEK UP-TO-DATE ASSESSMENTS
FROM PRINCIPAL MINORITY GROUP LEADERS, BUT WE DO NOT FEEL THAT
THEIR STATEMENTS WOULD HAVE SUBSTANTIALLY MODIFIED OUR CONCLUSIONS.
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